

RESEARCH

1. PURPOSE

- (1) The Board of Directors (the “Board”) and Interior Health Authority (“Interior Health”) are committed to exemplary standards of organizational behaviour and practice including active research and knowledge translation programs, and clear ethical frameworks that govern the conduct and review of research that Interior Health may engage in or support.
- (2) In order to maximize the quality and benefits of research, and promote a positive research environment, Interior Health will comply with the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research* and encourage researcher duties of honest and thoughtful inquiry, rigorous analysis, commitment to the dissemination of research results, and adherence to the use of professional standards.
- (3) In addressing the obligations for ensuring the ethical review, approval and conduct of research studies, Interior Health will comply with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and other regulations applicable to research that involves human participants living or deceased, and/or human biological materials.
- (4) In order to help transform the role of patient from a passive receptor of services to a proactive partner who helps shape health research and, as a result, health care, Interior Health will support patient-oriented research. Engaging patients, their caregivers, and families as partners in the research process will ensure that studies focus on patient-identified priorities, which ultimately leads to better patient outcomes.
- (5) In alignment with Interior Health mission, vision and values, research at Interior Health will foster a culture and practices that promote equity, diversity and inclusion. We recognize that systemic barriers, biases and inequities persist for Aboriginal Peoples, people with disabilities, racialized groups, LGBTQIA2S+ communities and others who experience stigma, discrimination or marginalization.

2. SCOPE

- (1) Interior Health has an objective of a well-focused, productive, and recognized research and knowledge translation program through:
 - (a) an active search for research opportunities that match organizational strength and capabilities, and population needs;

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- (b) review of studies conducted within its jurisdiction or under its auspices;
 - (c) research knowledge sharing and implementation into practice;
 - (d) participation in provincial initiatives to expand health services research capacity in British Columbia; and
 - (e) a coordinated effort to develop collaborative research partnerships with university-based researchers and other health authorities.
- (2) Interior Health is an organization that:
- (a) has the depth of resources and breadth of activity to support a broad research and knowledge translation program as part of the continuing search for knowledge, innovative health promotion techniques and new treatment options that will benefit those it serves and society as a whole; and
 - (b) has an obligation to enhance research capacity and to use the knowledge gained to support evidence-based decisions and care delivery.
- (3) Research involving human participants will be conducted in a manner that respects human dignity, protects the interests of the participants, maximizes the benefits of the research, and minimizes the harms.
- (4) Researchers enjoy important freedoms and privileges that include freedom of inquiry and the right to disseminate the results thereof, freedom to challenge conventional thought, independence, and the privilege of conducting research involving human participants.
- (5) The realization of these policy objectives will require an appropriate allocation of resources and the development of a comprehensive administrative program that:
- (a) ensures the protection of research participants;
 - (b) ensures the protection of Interior Health, including Interior Health staff and medical staff, as well as affiliated parties;
 - (c) serves to encourage research that is beneficial to Interior Health;
 - (d) ensures the efficient use of available resources;
 - (e) provides an environment that facilitates dialogue on research; and
 - (f) promotes the need to take ethical issues into consideration in all decision-making related to the research and knowledge translation program.

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- (6) Interior Health’s research and knowledge translation program functions under the authority of the Board.
- (7) The Board assigns to the President and Chief Executive Officer (the “CEO”) overall responsibility for the organization and leadership of the research and knowledge translation program.
- (8) The CEO may re-assign specific accountabilities to a Corporate Director of Research, or other such individual(s), competent to guide and directly oversee the research and knowledge translation program.
- (9) The CEO, with the assistance of the Corporate Director of Research or other such individual(s), will develop for Board approval a broad strategic plan for the enhancement and direction of the research and knowledge translation program in Interior Health; and
- (10) The CEO will assign the research and knowledge translation program appropriate priority in its corporate strategic and operational planning and ensure the provision of the required administrative support.

3. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as part of the normal Board Policy Manual review, or as required by specific events.

4. REFERENCES

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research*, 2016.

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, December 2018.

Interior Health Authority, Board Policy 3.18 *Research Ethics*, December 2019.